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-2- 5465, APRIL 20, 6, P.M. FROM LONDON

LOYD STATED THAT IN REPLYING TO HOUSE OF COMMONS QUESTIONS HE WOULD STATE THAT USG AND HMG WERE IN FULL AGREEMENT THAT HIGH-FLIGHTS SHOULD BE CONDUCTED WITH DISCRETION. I SUGGESTED SOMEWHAT STRONGER WORDING INDICATING THAT THE HIGH-FLIGHTS IN FACT HAD BEEN CONDUCTED DISCREETLY BUT ELICITED NO SPECIFIC COMMENT. SINCE SUBJECT OF HIGH-FLIGHTS IS FAR DOWN LIST OF QUESTIONS FOR REPLY DURING QUESTION PERIOD APRIL 22, THIS TOPIC MAY NOT BE REACHED AND MAY HAVE FADED SOMEWHAT FROM PUBLIC MIND ON NEXT OCCASION FOREIGN SECRETARY ANSWERS QUESTIONS, APRIL 27.

MEANWHILE PARTIAL CHANGE HAS OCCURED OVER WEEK-END IN TREATMENT OF HIGH-FLIGHTS BY SOME NEWSPAPERS AND IS NOT LIKELY THAT THIS CHANGE IS ENTIRELY SPONTANEOUS. FOR EXAMPLE, DAILY TELEGRAPH, AFTER DISCUSSING HIGH-FLIGHTS WITH EMBASSY OFFICERS, STATED APRIL 17 THAT "IT IS POSSIBLE....TO PUT UP GOOD ARGUMENTS (FOR AND AGAINST HIGH-FLIGHTS). IT SEEMS HIGHLY DOUBTFUL, HOWEVER, WHETHER BRITISH WELL ADVISED TO PRESS THEIR VIEW TO POINT OF MAKING IT SERIOUS ISSUE BETWEEN TWO COUNTRIES. IMPRESSION THIS GIVES TO WORLD IS ONE OF BRITAIN UNWILLING TO TAKE ANY RISKS IN FACE OF SOVIET THREATS. THIS BELIEF.... CARRIES FAR MORE DANGERS TO WESTERN UNITY THAN ANY INCIDENT LIKELY TO ARISE (FROM HIGH-FLIGHTS)."

SUNDAY OBSERVER WHICH HAD STRONGLY CRITICIZED INFLUENCE OF PENTAGON ON US FOREIGN POLICY DECISIONS STATED SOMEWHAT PIOUSLY APRIL 19TH THAT "IT IS DOUBTFUL IF SECTION OF BRITISH PRESS HAS DONE MUCH SERVICE TO WESTERN ALLIANCE BY SHOWING SUCH EXCESSIVE ALARM OVER AMERICAN DECISION TO FLY OCCASIONAL TRANSPORT PLANE ABOVE 10,000 FEET OVER AIR CORRIDOR TO BERLIN."

BBC NEWS BROADCAST AND SEVERAL NEWSPAPERS GAVE HEAVY WEEK-END COVERAGE TO STATE DEPARTMENT'S CLAIM THAT BRITISH PRESS SHOWING "TIMIDITY." SOMEWHAT SURPRISINGLY THIS

CHARGE HAS

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-3- 5465, APRIL 20, 6, P.M. FROM LONDON

CHARGE HAS PROVOKED SO FAR NO ANGRY EDITORIAL REACTION
EXCEPT IN DAILY MAIL. (FOR FULL PRESS SUMMARY SEE
EMBTel 5460).

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